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| Policy: | BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY |
| Reviewed: | August 2014 |
| Next Review: | 3 years or as legislation may require |
| Responsibility: | Head of Education and Care |
| Category: | Safeguarding (Childcare Policies) |

1. Introduction

This policy is for all parents/adults, practitioners and users of the Centre.

Children are born into a complex world, they need to know where they fit in, what is expected of them and what they can and cannot do. They are influenced by their surroundings, culture, television, society and peer group. Therefore, by the time children start at the Centre, they have been exposed to a variety of experiences. Children look to us as adults to be role models.

2. Aims of the Policy

- To ensure that all practitioners have clear and realistic expectations of children's behaviour relative to their stage of development.
- To ensure that there is a consistent approach across all services within our Centre; that our expectations are clear and children are treated fairly and sensitively.
- To ensure that practitioners are positive role models who handle situations sensitively and with care.
- To promote positive behaviour management across all services and ensure children's personal, social and emotional development.
- To ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.
- To identify behaviour which may be challenging to adults and give examples of effective strategies for dealing with this.

3. Issues Which May Affect Children's Behaviour

It is important that staff are aware of changes that may impact on children's behaviour. These include:

- Changes in the nature of family and community.
- Changing role and status of the family.
- More mobility; community liable to change.
- Impact of information technology and rapid social change.
- Greater job insecurity.
- Break-up of extended family and family support systems.

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- Increasing divorce rates – over 2 million children live with a single parent, usually with their mother.
- Emotional adjustments when parents re-marry or form other partnerships.

4. Strategies to Promote Positive Behaviour

Between the ages of 6 and 12 months, a baby begins to understand what you mean when you say the word 'no' and responds positively to praise, encouragement and support when establishing the difference between right and wrong.

From that moment on, the process of establishing rules begins.

At the Centre, we believe in positive behaviour management and this is reflected in our practice; we offer explanations rather than punishments. We use children and staff as role models to encourage other children to behave appropriately and use praise and sticker reward systems to establish positive behaviour patterns in children.

Positive behaviour management enables children to trust practitioners, understand rules, engage in their play and respond well to appropriate and real responsibilities and allows practitioners to use praise and rewards to shape and mould children's behaviour into that which is acceptable in society.

Effective behaviour strategies and practices must meet the development and individual needs of each child. An effective strategy, for example, would be unacceptable if directed towards an inappropriate outcome. Similarly, a method of interaction which might be appropriate for one child may be inappropriate for other children.

Setting Limits and Boundaries

We must understand the need for children to be given guidance as to what behaviour is acceptable or appropriate and what is not. Knowledge of limits and boundaries enables children to develop self-control and self-discipline.

Children often communicate their needs non-verbally through behaviour. The way in which they do this is a reflection of both their stage of development and of their individual needs and abilities. An inappropriate method of non-verbal or verbal communication used by a child can result in behaviour which is seen as unacceptable in terms of the limits and boundaries set.

The role of the practitioner is to guide and support children through the early learning process and to ensure their safety and well-being, not to achieve conformity at the expense of understanding.

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Wherever possible, children should be involved in setting their own rules and boundaries and positive statements should be used. Examples of the rules include:

- ⇒ Kind hands
- ⇒ Kind feet
- ⇒ Walk indoors
- ⇒ Quiet voices

Praise

Achievement, at whatever level and in whatever area, is personally satisfying to a child, but even more importantly it earns, or should earn, adult approval and praise. Such acclaim builds a child's confidence and self-esteem.

Both praise and encouragement should be used for the purpose of promoting behaviours in the child which are recognised as appropriate for the child's stage of development. Verbal praise is very effective with this age group and is used constantly throughout the day. Simple statements such as "I am so pleased that Charlotte is sitting beautifully," allow the children who are not quite ready, to copy the required behaviour from the children who are.

Praise supports a 'can do' attitude, which is psychologically healthy and matches the innate desire of young children to please and to assume independence and responsibility. These, along with feelings of emotional well-being, are some of the necessary conditions for happiness, all of which inter-relates to good behaviour and positive social behaviour.

Research has shown that early adult praise and support appears to be particularly important to boys. Boys seem to be easily discouraged by initial failure and may tend to reject those things which have brought about failure, preferring to seek acclaim by acting the fool, talking and behaving aggressively and, often, challenging authority.

Rewards

Rewards are used throughout the Centre to reinforce appropriate behaviour, these may include:

- ⇒ Smiles
- ⇒ Applause
- ⇒ Positive comments
- ⇒ Displaying work
- ⇒ Verbal encouragement
- ⇒ Showing work to other staff
- ⇒ Giving responsibility

Walton Lane Nursery School & Rocking Horse Club

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- ⇒ Giving the next turn
- ⇒ Special privileges
- ⇒ Sharing good behaviour with parents
- ⇒ Stickers

Care should be taken not to give stickers indiscriminately as they then become meaningless.

Wherever possible the sticker should reflect the behaviour that is being rewarded or the child's achievement. Examples of stickers might be:

- ⇒ 'Good listening'
- ⇒ 'I tidied up'
- ⇒ 'I can count to 5'

Stickers may also be given to children as encouragement at times such as:

- ⇒ Settling in
- ⇒ Potty training
- ⇒ Meal times

In this case the stickers provide information for parents, as well as praise and encouragement for the child, for example 'I ate all my lunch'.

Learning Journeys

Every child within the Centre has a Learning Journey. This is the place in which all of their achievements are recorded and celebrated. The Learning Journey is regularly shared with the child and their parents. Parents and children are encouraged to bring in things in that reflect achievements at home (e.g. a swimming certificate, a holiday photo or a sticker for being brave at the dentist).

In this way the development of the whole child is celebrated. The Learning Journey acts as a tool to support a child's growing sense of self and self-esteem.

5. Out of School Clubs

The children who attend our out of school clubs are involved in establishing their own rules and codes of conduct. These are agreed and reinforced at the beginning of each holiday club or at the start of a new term.

Reward schemes include:

- ⇒ Certificates at the end of the week for consistent good behaviour
- ⇒ Certificates for being helpful

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⇒ Team points during holiday club

In instances when children are in conflict, practitioners will support them in resolving their conflicts by using mediation. This strategy allows children to develop the skills necessary to talk through disagreements and devise their own solutions to problems.

6. Role of the Practitioner

In order to treat every child with respect and dignity, practitioners must be aware of children's strengths, understand that they have reasons for their actions and give each child regular and honest feedback that is positive.

Practitioners should ensure that:

- Children are defined in terms of their strengths;
- Children are affirmed as individuals;
- Children's emotional well-being is nurtured;
- Children are kept safe from harm;
- Children receive positive feedback each day;
- Connecting links with the family and wider world are affirmed and extended;
- Equitable opportunities for learning are provided irrespective of gender, age, background or ethnicity;
- Understanding and support is provided.

Practitioners should encourage and teach children to:

- Feel comfortable with the routines, customs and regular events;
- Know the limits and boundaries of acceptable behaviour;
- Learn with and alongside others;
- Develop verbal and non-verbal communication for a range of purposes;
- Discover and develop appropriate ways of expressing their feelings, views and opinions.

7. Sanctions

Sanctions are rarely given but are seen in the form of:

- Adult disapproval
- Discussing behaviour with parents
- Prompting to say sorry

Our practitioners are careful to never humiliate a child. We believe that the sanction must match inappropriate behaviour. We are always fair and consistent and never remove rewards.

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It is vital to always turn a sanction into a positive learning experience and repair any damage to relationships.

In extreme circumstances when a child is at risk of hurting themselves or other people, the child will need to be placed in a 'time out' area; to allow them to calm down.

This will be under the direct supervision of an adult.

8. Unacceptable Practices

Legislation requires that no force shall be used, by way of correction or punishment, towards any child enrolled at or attending the Centre. In addition, the following practices are unacceptable:

- Confinement of a child against their will
- Deprivation of food, drink, warmth, shelter or protection
- Blame, harsh language and belittling or degrading responses
- Verbal abuse
- Any form of physical ill-treatment, corporal punishment, solitary confinement or immobilisation
- A child must never be left unsupervised.

If there are reasonable grounds for believing that any member of the Centre's staff, or any other person has physically ill-treated a child or has used guidance and control methods which are not acceptable, then that person must be excluded from coming into contact with the children until it has been investigated following the Centre's Grievance and Disciplinary Policy.

9. Parental Involvement in Children's Behaviour

Children's behaviour cannot be considered in isolation; it is inextricably linked to their family circumstances and there are many issues affecting children's behaviour. Parents are an integral part of the team. They should feel welcome to spend time in the service, discuss concerns and participate in decision making concerning their child. There should be regular discussion, both formal and informal, between parents and practitioners about their child, including sharing of specific, observation-based evidence.

Acknowledgement by practitioners of the important part parents play as the first teachers and prime caregivers of their children models the behaviours of giving respect and dignity, which are a requirement for working with children.

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Many parents feel isolated and confused by the continual demands of their children. They may have experienced poor parenting skills themselves or may feel that they are failing as parents. Parents need to know that practitioners have empathy with their situation and are completely trustworthy.

Our practitioners offer advice and support in a sensitive manner:

- We make our setting welcoming to all parents.
- We make time to talk to, and with, parents about their child's behaviour, possible rewards to use at home and how to deal with instances of difficult behaviour.
- We encourage parents to come into the setting and see the activities the children are engaged in. We show parents examples of activities that children might like to do at home.
- We are able to signpost parents who need additional help or support.

10. When Further Help is Needed

Everyone is responsible for behaviour management. Variations in behaviour are a normal part of young children's development. Sometimes, however, changes in behaviour occur which cannot be linked to development or environmental factors.

If a range of untypical or challenging behaviours persist after time, there may be an underlying reason. Where concerns have been raised by both practitioners and the child's family, support should be sought from the Senior Link Worker. A plan of action may be set up to identify the problem.

11. Implementing a Plan of Action

When considering implementing any plan of action always:

- Consult with the Senior Link Worker;
- Consider the child's family values and traditions;
- Work with parents, using a positive approach;
- Take into account the child's developmental level and temperament;
- Work as a team to develop a plan of action and decide who will have prime responsibility for working with the child within the Centre;
- Structure the environment to support the child;
- Consistently work with the child in positive ways;
- Notice every sign of progress, however small, noting what strategy works and what doesn't work. Share the information with other practitioners, parents and specialists;
- Give your intervention strategies time to work (at least four weeks);
- Maintain confidentiality and respect the child's right to dignity and protection at all times.

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12. The Use of Reasonable Force

12.1 Schools can use reasonable force to:

- Prevent a child leaving the room where allowing the child to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others.
- Prevent a child behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit.
- Prevent a child from attacking (punching/kicking/scratching/headbutting etc etc) a member of staff or another child, or to stop a fight.
- Restrain a child at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

12.2 Schools cannot

- Use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment

13.3 Communicating the school's approach to the use of force

- Every school is required by law to have a behaviour policy and to make this policy known to staff, parents and children. The Governing Body expects the school behaviour policy to include the power to use reasonable force.
- Any policy on the use of reasonable force should acknowledge their legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with SEN.
- Schools do not require parental consent to use force on a student.
- Schools should **not** have a 'no contact' policy. There is a real risk that such a policy might place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards a child, or prevent them taking action needed to prevent a child causing harm.
- By taking steps to ensure that staff, children and parents are clear about when force might be used, the school will reduce the likelihood of complaints being made when force has been used properly.

13.4 What is reasonable force?

- The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with children.
- Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

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- In our Centre where children are in a situation that is likely to endanger themselves, others, or damage to property is likely to occur, staff will attempt to defuse the situation by speaking to the child in a calm voice; if the situation continues to escalate, and is developing into the child displaying physical aggression which is likely to cause injury or damage to property, the member of staff dealing with the situation will, where possible, seat the child on a chair, seating themselves behind. If the child continues to display physical aggression the member of staff will use reasonable force to hold the child's hands to avoid any contact that is likely to cause injury. This method should be used for the shortest length of time possible until the child has regained control of their own behaviour and the likelihood of further incidents of physical aggression has declined. Where it is not possible to seat the child on a chair, the same procedure should be followed using the floor.

When the situation is calm, the member of staff will then discuss the incident quietly and calmly with the child, ensuring that the child is made aware that it is not acceptable to hurt other people or damage property.

- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control children and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between children or blocking a child's path, or active physical contact such as leading a child by the arm out of a classroom.
- Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a child under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two children are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to

13.5 Who can use reasonable force?

- All members of staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.
- This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the head teacher has temporarily put in charge of children such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

13.6 Staff Training

- Schools need to take their own decisions about staff training. The head teacher should consider whether members of staff require any additional training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities and should consider the needs of the children when doing so.

13.7 Telling Parents when force has been used

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- It is good practice for schools to speak to parents about serious incidents involving the use of force and to consider how best to record such serious incidents. It is up to schools to decide whether it is appropriate to report the use of force to parents.

13. Children with Additional Needs

Some causes of worrying behaviour may stem from a physiological rather than an emotional cause.

In cases like this, the child's additional needs will be met by the Centre SENCO, our practitioners, and outside agencies, who will work alongside parents setting up an agreed special programme of education.

14. Dissemination

This policy is available for all parents, governors, staff and prospective parents.

15. Review Procedure

This policy is reviewed every three years or as legislation may require by the Head of Education and Care. The Team Leaders are responsible for ensuring that the policy is disseminated to all staff.